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RUEHTH/USDAO ATHENS GR PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L USEU BRUSSELS 000810

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PASS TO NAVCENT POLAD

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/10/2019
TAGS: MOPS MARR PREL EWWT XW XF EUN
SUBJECT: EU CONSIDERING ADDITIONAL COUNTER-PIRACY ACTIVITIES

REF: USEU BRUSSELS 702

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Christopher Murray for
reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

¶1. (C//NF) Summary: (C//NF) The EU is providing to the U.S. and other UNSC Perm Five and G-8 governments a copy of a letter that EU High Rep Javier Solana has sent to EU Foreign and Defense Ministers. The letter describes additional steps the EU can take to combat piracy off the coast of Somalia, urging Member States to extend the mandate of the EU's counter-piracy operation ATALANTA, expand ATALANTA's area of operations, and examine long-term capacity-building activities that will address the root causes of piracy on land. End Summary.

¶2. (C//NF) As reported REFTEL, EU Foreign and Defense Ministers discussed the French proposal to launch an EU training mission for Somali security forces during the May 18 General Affairs and External Relations Council meeting. The following week, during a visit to the EU's counter-piracy military headquarters in Northwood, UK, EU Ambassador were briefed on Operation ATALANTA and received a draft copy of the operation's mid-mandate review, which our contacts tell

us recommends EU action to address the root causes on land of piracy. The letter from EU Council High Rep Solana (text in para 3), was sent to EU Foreign and Defense Ministers a few days later and makes similar recommendations.

¶3. (SBU)

Begin text of letter:

Brussels, 28 May 2009

Dear Minister,

The conflict in Somalia dictates an increased international effort. The rise in acts of piracy and the taking hostage of hundreds of people from dozens of countries complicates the challenge of bringing stability to the Horn of Africa. This situation constitutes a threat to international order. It requires a global and determined action.

The EU took the initiative by launching its first naval operation in the Gulf of Aden at the end of 2008. Working in coordination with all the partners, our counter-piracy efforts have been successful in bringing greater security to the waters off Somalia. The holding of the international Conference on Somalia in Brussels under the auspices of the United Nations and the European Commission with all the key actors in April demonstrated our strong commitment to the Transitional Federal Government.

Today we need to move forward and to look closer at the root causes of the phenomenon. Some of our EU Members States are already working on new initiatives. Our meeting at the May Council bore a fruitful discussion. Based on this I have developed a number of proposals in the 6-monthly report of the naval operation "Atalanta" for possible concrete actions along two axes: the strengthening of Atalanta, and 6 new potential areas of work.

First, we should build on the success of Atalanta.

This is an impressive mission which we should give greater visibility to. We should extend its mandate for another year and expand the area of operations. This has resource implications and I would be grateful for your continued efforts to ensure that Atalanta has the means necessary to fully execute its mission. I have also made proposals for how we can adapt its mandate.

Second and importantly, we should look at longer term durable solutions for stability in Somalia and the region -- both at sea and on land.

Along 6 lines of activity:

- consideration for the appointment of an EU Special Representative for the region;
- regional maritime capability development;
- reinforced support to the African Union in Somalia;
- capacity building for the Somalia Security sector, (including the Somali Police Force, Coast Guard, and National Security Forces);
- long term assistance strategy for Somalia;
- reinforced international legal framework to increase the risks and decrease the profits for pirates.

I would like to use the occasion of our forthcoming meetings, at the Luxembourg Council in June and in the margins of the next OSCE and G8 ministerial meetings for instance, to have a thorough discussion on these proposals and I look forward to hearing your views.

Yours sincerely,

(signed) Javier SOLANA

End text of letter.

MURRAY